(a) whether it is a fact that Government had closed down its three public sector vaccine units and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government has now decided to restart the production of vaccine in these units and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) on what grounds the earlier closure order has been revoked?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) The Government has not taken any decision to close down the three Public Sector Vaccine Manufacturing Units, namely, the Central Research Institute, Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, the Pasteur Institute of India, Coonoor, Tamil Nadu and BCG Vaccine Laboratory, Chennai, Tamilnadu. The manufacturing licenses of these three Institutes were suspended by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCG(I)) in January, 2008 since they were not found in compliance with the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) as provided under Schedule M of Drugs and Cosmetic Rules, 1945.

(b) and (c) A proposal for upgradation of the facilities at CRI Kasauli to make them GMP compliant has now been received WHO experts have examined this and have opined that this is feasible. The production of vaccines can be restarted after compliance with GMP requirements.

Shortage of post graduate seats

640. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge shortage of Post Graduate seats for medical graduates in our country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the actual number of seats of Post Graduates and Medical Graduates at present; and

(c) by when the P.G. seats are likely to be increased?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) At present approximately 11,600 seats are available in different postgraduate courses for approximately 23000 MBBS students passed out from various medical colleges across the country. Further National Board of Examination also provides nearly 5006 seats in various DNB courses annually. Thus, Post graduation facilities are available for nearly 70% of the MBBS students passing out throughout the country.

As per the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956, as amended and the Regulations made thereunder, it is for the State Government to decide the need to start/increase Post Graduate (P.G.) seats in a medical college. The Central Government is giving permission for starting/increase of PG seats in a medical college based on the Essentiality Certificate given by the respective State Government and availability of infrastructural facilities.

Additional budgetary allocation for IEC activities

†641. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.